

# Commencement 2015 – Frequently Asked Questions

---

## Cap & Gown Information

Q: I am unable to come to campus. How do I order my cap and gown?

A: Orders can be taken via [www.uscbookstore.com](http://www.uscbookstore.com), from February – May 1, 2015

All online orders must be shipped. The fee for shipping/processing is \$20.00. Due to limited storage, gowns cannot be stored if ordered online. For additional questions, please call 213.740.8997

Q: How do I get my hood?

A: Your hood is included with your regalia order by indicating which degree you're receiving.

Q: Can I rent or purchase my hood by itself?

A: Yes, for additional information contact the USC Bookstore at 213.740.8997.

Q: Who wears tams?

A: PhD and EdD students may wear tams instead of mortar boards (caps) at the ceremony. *Tams must be purchased; mortar boards are included with cap and gown rentals.*

Q: How do we manage our hoods and gowns before and during the ceremony?

A: It's recommended to hang your gown to avoid wrinkling. Your hood should be carried on your left arm until you are "hooded" by your chair.

Q: What color is my hood?

A: Master's/EdD - Light Blue (make sure the USC Bookstore knows it's an education degree)  
PhD - Dark Blue

Q: Who is eligible for honor cords?

A: Undergraduate students only.

Q: If I have graduated from another USC school, can I wear my robe from that ceremony?

A: Yes.

Q: When is the deadline to order my robe if I want to buy it?

A: March 13. It takes weeks to produce and ship the regalia. Visit [www.uscbookstore.com](http://www.uscbookstore.com) for more details.

## Commencement Ceremonies

Q: What's the difference between Main Commencement Ceremony, Rossier Doctoral Commencement Ceremony, and Rossier Master's Commencement Ceremony?

A: At the Main Ceremony, graduates from the entire University participate. The Rossier Doctoral Commencement Ceremony is only for the EdD and PhD students, at which that time they are hooded. The Rossier Master's Commencement Ceremony is only for the School of Education graduates. The Dean confers your degree at this ceremony.

Q: How long does the ceremony last?

A: The Master's Ceremony begins at 3:30 p.m. and usually lasts an hour and a half; ending approximately at 5:00 p.m. Reception will follow. See *the Doctoral section for details about that ceremony.*

Q: What is the timeline for Commencement?

A: For the Main Commencement Ceremony, candidates are to assemble promptly at 7:45 a.m. and all guests are requested to be in their seats by 8:15 a.m. Procession begins promptly at 8:30 a.m. and the ceremony concludes at 10:00 a.m. The Rossier Master's Ceremony follows at 3:30 p.m.

Q: Do I have to register for Commencement?

A: There is no universal registration for Main Commencement. Any student with an anticipated graduation semester of Fall 2014, Spring 2015, or Summer 2015 is welcome to participate. Diplomas for May graduates will be mailed by July 2015. At the Rossier ceremony, you will be given an empty diploma cover with additional information.

Students who graduated in Fall 2014 or who have an expected graduation date of Spring or Summer 2015 will be listed in the Commencement program. If you would like to check your expected graduation date, please see the Degree Progress Department located in TRO 101.

Q: Do my guests need tickets to attend the Main Commencement Ceremony?

A: No. All seating is provided on a first come, first served basis.

Q: If I graduated in Fall 2014, can I participate in Commencement May 2015?

A: Yes, as long as you have not previously participated in commencement ceremonies.

### **Master's Commencement Ceremony**

Q: How do I attend Commencement while I'm still student teaching?

A: You are able to walk in Commencement, but you will need to go back to the school to finish out your remaining weeks of student teaching. However, if the school district is open longer than our classes, and they stop on USC's official last day of class.

Q: Are tickets required for guest(s) to attend the Rossier Master's Commencement Ceremony?

A: Yes, see ticket procedure for more details.

Q: How do I attend commencement if I'm still in class and student teaching?

A: If you will be missing class for any reason (class conflicts, travel plans, etc.) you must let your Course Instructor and your Guiding Teacher know in advance. It is your responsibility to make arrangements to make up missed class time and fieldwork. Rossier faculty are aware that you may need to make special arrangements due to Commencement and are willing to make accommodations depending on your circumstances.

### **Doctoral Commencement Ceremony**

Q: Who participates in the Rossier Doctoral Commencement Ceremony?

A: The Rossier Doctoral Ceremony is for both PhD and EdD students.

Q: Where is the School of Education's Doctoral Hooding Ceremony being held?

A: McCarthy Quad

Q: Who will hood me at the Doctoral Commencement Ceremony?

A: Doctoral students are hooded by their chair. If your chair is not present, another chair or a Vice or Associate Dean will step in.

Q: How long does the Doctoral Commencement Ceremony last?

A: The ceremony lasts approximately an hour and a half; ending approximately at 4:30 p.m. Reception will follow.

Q: Are tickets required for guest(s) to attend the Rossier Doctoral Commencement Ceremony?

A: No, this year, tickets are only required for the Master's Ceremony.

## **RSVP & Tickets**

Q: I am a graduate, do I need a ticket?

A: No, your cap and gown will admit you.

Q: Do my guests need tickets to attend the Rossier Commencement Ceremonies?

A: Yes, Rossier's Master's Ceremony does require tickets.

Q: Why are guest tickets required for the Rossier Commencement Ceremonies?

A: The ticket requirement has been added due to the increasing number of graduating students.

Q: Why do you have to reserve our tickets online, if we are already guaranteed tickets?

A: All candidates are guaranteed a certain number of tickets each year. The reason that you still must reserve those tickets is because not all students participating need all of the guaranteed tickets. This process lets us know for sure what each student needs.

In addition, this will help you or the other students who want more tickets. Once we are able to determine who doesn't want all of their tickets we will be able to determine how many tickets will be available for the lottery.

You can only reserve tickets online because it allows you to print a copy for your records as well as send us the important information.

Q: After I receive my guaranteed tickets, can I receive any more?

A: After all the guaranteed tickets have been allocated, students can enter the lottery for more tickets. Please see ticket procedure for more details.

Q: Can I RSVP without a USC email account?

A: No, your USC email and Student ID # are used as your login and password.

Q: If I am out of state, how do I get my tickets?

A: We have an online ticketing system that will allow you to print your tickets from any location.

Q: Does my child need a ticket to attend?

A: Any children who look over the age of 3 will require a ticket. Strollers will not be permitted.

Q: Can anyone attend without a ticket "standing room only?" Can they stand outside the gate? Will they be able to see from the street?

A: There will be no standing room in the area. Only those with tickets will be admitted. Guests will not be allowed to block any exits, aisles, or paths of the ceremony.

## **Commencement Book**

Q: What information does the Commencement Book include?

A: The USC Commencement Book includes the graduate's name and previously earned degrees. The format is as follows: graduate name, current degree program, and previously earned degree.

Q: Can you add/delete students' names from the Commencement Book?

A: Students are added or removed from the Commencement Book based on whether or not they have finished their requirements within the specified time frame.

Q: If I have more than one major, will I be listed in only one section or in all sections?

A: Your name will be listed in all sections.

Q: What should I do if I legally changed my name and want it to appear in the Commencement Book?

A: If you've legally changed your name and want it to appear in the USC Commencement Book, you will need to contact the Office of Academic Records and Registrar in the Verifications Department at (213) 740-9230. You can either do this in person or by fax. This information can be faxed to (213) 740-5986 (ATTN: Tess). Include ID number, current name, email, phone and legal document with your change included.

Q: I only want my middle initial to appear in the Commencement Book instead of my full middle name.

A: Your name will appear as your University record indicates. To make changes contact the Office of Academic Records.

## **DIPLOMAS**

Q: When should I expect my diploma to arrive and will it arrive with a hard cover?

A: Diploma's are mailed 4-8 weeks after the conclusion of the final semester; they're mailed in a cardboard envelope sent via 1st class mail.

Q: How much do I have to pay for the shipping of my diploma?

A: There is no cost for shipping; the diplomas are mailed to the permanent address on file. It's recommended the student comes to pick up the diploma; contact the USC Diploma Department at 213.740.7070.

## **Miscellaneous Questions**

Q: How many times a year does commencement take place?

A: It occurs in the May of each academic year.

Q: How much time will it take to exit campus after Commencement?

A: Allow approximately an hour to get off campus.

Q: Are there any fees or costs associated with Commencement?

A: There are no fees for participating in commencement. You only need to rent your regalia. Class ring, announcements, etc. are optional.

Q: Is parking complimentary for guests?

A: Parking for all official commencement events is complimentary.

Q: What if it rains?

A: There is no rain-date for Commencement. Fortunately, Southern California tends to be dry in May, though we recommend that you bring an umbrella if rain is forecasted.

Q: Where do I order announcements?

A: Announcements are ordered at the Bookstore. For more information, visit [www.uscbookstore.com](http://www.uscbookstore.com) under the graduation link.

Q: If one of my guests is in a wheelchair, will his/her seating be any different?

A: We have a section for wheelchairs. One additional guest will be able to sit with him/her in this section.

Q: Will wheelchairs be available for the main and Rossier commencements? Will handicapped parking be available?

A: Please go to the main commencement site for information about renting wheelchairs and parking information.

Log on to: [www.usc.edu/commencement](http://www.usc.edu/commencement) (under the "Commencement Day" tab)